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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant	:	John Skoufis
Serial No.	:	09/879,613
Filed	:	06/12/2001
For	:	PEROXIDE PRESERVATION
Group Art Unit	:	3728
Examiner	:	Mohandesi, Jila M.

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Gregor N. Neff - Reg. No. 20,596
Name of Applicant, Assignee or Registered Representative

Signature

January 29, 2004
Date of Signature

Duplicate of paper #11

AMENDMENT UNDER RULE 116

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Commissioner For Patents
P.O. Box 1450
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Sir:

Please amend the claims in the above-identified patent application as set forth below:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 (currently amended)

1. A method of packaging a PVA sponge for use in scrubbing semiconductor wafers, said method comprising:

(a) placing said sponge in a [container] flexible plastic bag;

(b) said sponge containing a quantity of de-ionized water with around 0.05% to substantially less than 1% by volume of hydrogen peroxide; and

(c) sealing said [container] bag.

Claim 2 (withdrawn)

Claim 3 (previously amended)

3. A method as in Claim 1 in which said quantity of de-ionized water with hydrogen peroxide is between an amount sufficient to wet said sponge and an amount necessary to saturate said sponge.

Claim 4 (previously amended)

4. A method as in Claim 1 in which the volume of hydrogen peroxide is around 0.1%.

Claim 5 (currently amended)

A method of packaging a [cleaning article] PVA sponge brush, said method comprising placing said cleaning article in a [container] plastic bag, said [cleaning article] sponge brush

containing a quantity of de-ionized water, said water containing hydrogen peroxide in an amount effective to kill and retard the growth of bacteria in said cleaning article but less than an amount sufficient to develop significant quantities of metallic ions in said container, and sealing said container, in which said amount of hydrogen peroxide is about 0.05% to substantially less than 1% by volume.

Claim 6 (withdrawn)

Claim 7 (withdrawn)

Claim 8 (withdrawn)

Claim 9 (currently amended)

A packaged [cleaning article] PVA sponge for use in clean rooms, said cleaning article having particulate, metal ion and anionic counts at or below the values specified for a clean room, said package comprising a sealed [container] flexible plastic bag, said [cleaning article] sponge being positioned in said [container] bag, and containing a quantity of de-ionized water, said de-ionized water containing hydrogen peroxide in a concentration effective to kill and retard the growth of bacteria in said [cleaning article] sponge, said amount being low enough to substantially ensure decomposition of said hydrogen peroxide in a relatively short period of time after the

container is sealed and being between 0.05% and substantially less than 1% by volume.

Claim 10 (withdrawn)

Claim 11 (withdrawn)

Claim 12 (previously amended)

12. A cleaning article as in Claim 9 in which said cleaning article is a PVA sponge for scrubbing semiconductor wafer surfaces, and said concentration of hydrogen peroxide is around 0.1 percent by volume.

Claim 13 (withdrawn)

Claim 14 (withdrawn)

REMARKS

This proposed Rule 116 Amendment has been submitted at the suggestion of the Examiner pursuant to discussions earlier today in the hope that it will place the application in condition for immediate allowance.

As it was explained in the telephone conference, the invention lies in the counter-intuitive reduction of hydrogen peroxide concentration levels to very low levels so that the hydrogen peroxide is virtually certain to decompose into its harmless components shortly after it is packaged. This avoids having the hydrogen peroxide present in the sponge for a long time before the sponge is unpackaged for use. This is contrary to the teaching of the prior art in which higher concentrations of hydrogen peroxide are specified, apparently to insure that enough hydrogen peroxide is available to act as a bactericide at all times prior to the package being opened.

The inventor has recognized that this can result in excessively high metallic ion content in the sponge.

Accordingly, the claims now have been amended to recite a hydrogen peroxide concentration of "substantially" below 1%, down to a minimum of about 0.05%.

The claims also contrast from the principal prior art reference in that the container specified as a plastic bag which

is typically used for packaging new, unused sponge brushes as opposed to used sponge brushes being dealt with in the principal prior art reference.

Certain of the claims have been cancelled by this Amendment so that the total remaining claims are six in number, thus simplifying the claim structure.

It is respectfully requested that the application be allowed and passed to issue.

If this Amendment is not deemed to place the application in condition for immediate allowance, please enter the Amendment in order to place the claims in better condition for appeal.

Respectfully submitted,

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